3:Iyer E-5 (no date) 1948 AW5 Coorg AW5

136 Since 1902 systematic arrangements have been made by Government for their capture in pits as in Malabar, Cochin and Travancore. Bisons frequent the densest forests and highest hills, especially in Marenad and Hormalnad. Bears generally abound in the north-west. Tigers and leopards are also found. Sambur, spotted deer, and barking deer are general in the woods. The most important bird is the hornbill, but there are peacocks, water fowl and jungle-cock, over and above the most ordinary and common Indian birds. Snakes are plentiful and cobra haunt the bamboo forests. There is a large variety of fish. The best fish in size and quality is the plantain fish.

Meteorology and Climate

132 Coorg is a small country, and yet its high mountain ridges and narrow valleys, its wood-clad hill slopes and open champaign tracts greatly influence its atmospheric conditions. Still the dry eastern district may present as steady a climate as the moist hilly tract along the Ghats or the Mercara plateau. The hot, rainy and cold seasons have to be distinguished. Throughout the year the atmosphere is humid, and humidity is precipitated either in dense mists or in showers of rain. In July the monsoon reaches its greatest vehemence. The Coorg hills send the floods controlled by steep river banks to the east and west and stand forth in renewed beauty. In September the sun breaks through the dense atmosphere. In November the north-east winds carry heavy clouds from the eastern coast which discharge themselves chiefly in the east and south-east of Coorg. The greater part of December is foggy, but towards the end of the month the weather becomes delightfully clear and fresh. The annual rainfall at Mercara is 133 inches. On the whole, the influence of the Coorg climate with its average temperature of 60° F. is salubrious. The nights are cool throughout the year.

Prehistory

172 Our knowledge of the prehistory of Coorg is very scanty. Prehistoric dolmens or burial cairns are found in Coorg as in other parts of South India. The first discovery of them in large numbers was made by Lieut. Mackenzie in 1868 on Bane near Virajpet. Captain Cole followed it up with great enthusiasm and his excavations yielded interesting results. All the cairns found are either level with the ground, or their tops crop just a little out of it. When laid bare, they present a stone chamber 7 ft. x 4 ft. x 5 ft. composed of four upright granite slabs, 7 or 8 inches thick, and a capstone which projects over the uprights. The flooring is likewise of stone. The narrow front slab has an aperture of an irregular curve nearly 2 ft. in diameter broken out from the top and generally faces east. Sometimes a compartment may be two-chambered. These cairns are either

3:Iyer E-5 (no date) 1948 AW5 Coorg AW5

solitary or in groups, in some cases forming regular rows. The relics found in them are peculiarly shaped pottery, buried in the earth that nearly fills the chambers. The vessels contain earth, sand, bones, iron spear-heads and beads. The pottery consists of chatties and urns of burnt clay and is of a lead or black colour. They are smooth and shining and can hardly be said to be glazed. Bones, ashes and bits of charcoal are usually found at the bottom of the urns; grains of ragi have also been found inside the chambers. Beads of red cornelian of a cylindrical shape are occasionally met with in the smaller pottery. The iron implements, spears, and arrow heads are very much corroded so that their shape is hardly distinguishable. These cairns apparently were the resting places of the earthly remains of a generation that existed anterior to the historical records of the present local races. The dolmens are also called pandu-kuzhies or dwellings of the Pandus by the Coorgs. 172

Traditional History

The early history of Coorg is based primarily on Puranic legends and surmises covering a period of over ten centuries. The three names, Brahmakshetra, Matsyadesa and Kroda-Desa are applied to Coorg. The Puranic account is found in the *Cauvery Mahatmya*. It describes the origin of the Cauvery, and the place from which it arises. 173

According to *Cauvery Mahatmya*, the Coorgs are Ugras by descent, that is the offspring of a Kshatriya father and a Sudra mother. The Kshatriya was a Kadamba prince of the Matsya country and known as Chandravarma. He was very religious by nature, and after a long pilgrimage to holy shrines in the south he came to Brahmagiri and propitiated the Goddess Parvati, who bestowed on him a kingdom there and provided him with a Sudra wife by whom he had eleven sons. She also promised to bless the country by appearing in it as the river Cauvery. The sons brought up as Kshatriyas in their turn obtained as wives the three hundred daughters born of Sudra mothers to the king of Vidarbha (Berar). Chandravarma having crowned his eldest son Devakanta as successor, took leave of him, predicting that Cauvery would soon appear as the river. These sons had more than a hundred sons each, and they spread themselves all over the country. This tearing up of the ground was like the work of boars, and the country was therefore called Kroda-Desa or boar-country from which arose the name Kodagu.

There is another popular legend which throws some light on the early history of the Coorgs. In former times there lived in Malabar six brothers and a sister. Five of them accompanied by their sister, Ponnam-balathamma, went to Coorg by the Peddoregghat. While they were on the road, four of them said, "How is it that our sister comes with us?

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

349 *Nanjunda Arasu*, who had ruled over Periapatam. Shortly before his death, whilst on a visit to his nephew, the Coorg Rajah Dodda-Vírappa Vodeya, the fortress fell through treachery into the hands of the Mysoreans with the loss of all his remaining family. In his affliction he addressed the Coorg Rajah thus: "As old age had come upon us, we intended with your permission to have placed our son in the Government of Periapatam and, renouncing the desire of this world, to have given ourselves to constant adoration of Siva. At such time of old age the great God has shown us a misery, we ought never to have looked upon. Do you take possession of the country which has passed from our hands? ⅄ Build and give us a house to live in till our life come to a close, and a temple for Vírabhadra, our household god. Besides, it is our mind, to consecrate a Linga in our name. For this purpose let a temple be built on the banks of the Kávéri river, in it a Linga be consecrated in our name after the close of our life, our grave be made in front of that temple, a stone portico be built over it and a Basavéshvara consecrated in it." In compliance with this request Dodda-Vírappa had a palace built near the river on the spot chosen by him at Holesálhalli, surrounding it with a ditch, settled him there and gave it the name Nanjaráyapattana. For his bodyguard he appointed 700 Coorgmen. He built also Vírabhadra's temple, erected another stone temple over the Linga, called Nanjundéshvara, and after Nanjunda's death he laid him in a grave constructed according to his wishes and made a grant of some lands for the perpetual performance of a religious service.

[344]

● 172

c. Antique Sepulchres or Cairns and Monumental Stones.

Cairns, those mysterious prehistoric tumuli, which are found all over the old world from Scandinavia to the far East and which puzzle alike the simple peasant and the astute

⅄ [Errata: This should read "hands." (Period), rather than "hands?". See Corrigenda, Cat. 116, p. 473 — Analyst]

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

archæologist, have lately been discovered also in Coorg and upon further investigation, their structure and contents prove to be of a character similar to that of the Cairns so widely distributed over Mysore, Coimbatore, Salem, Madura and other districts in Southern India. They are also remarkably like the ancient Allemanic tumuli, found in Southern Germany and Switzerland which contain similar pottery and implements. 172 ●

The first discovery of them in Coorg in large numbers—for a solitary one had been opened at Almanda in Beppunád by Dr. H. Moegling in 1856—was made by Lieut. Mackenzie, Assistant Superintendent, in 1868 on Bánè[1] near Virájpet, but soon others were found and in better preservation near Fraserpet on the Mysore side of the Kávéri. The matter was taken up with great enthusiasm by Captain Cole the Superintendent of Coorg, and the excavations led to very satisfactory results. All of the Cairns found are either level with the ground or their tops crop just a little out of it. When laid bare, they present a stone chamber about 7 feet long, 4 feet wide and 4 feet high, composed of 4 upright granite slabs 7 or 8 inches thick and surmounted by a large slab that projects over the sides; the flooring is likewise of stone. The narrow front slab has an aperture of an irregular curve nearly 2 feet in diameter, broken out from the top and generally faces east. Sometimes a large compartment is by a partition stone divided into two chambers. These Cairns are either solitary or in groups, in some instances forming regular rows, so as to give the appearance of streets. Others are surrounded by a single or double circle of stones from 2 to 3 feet high. Many seem to have been tampered with by the natives for the sake of the stone-slabs or in the expectation of finding treasure. The relics found in them are peculiarly shaped pottery, buried in earth that nearly fills the chambers. The vessels contain earth, sand, bones, iron spear heads and beads. The pottery

[1] [Errata: This should read "on a Báne" See Corrigenda, Cat. 116, P. 493--Analyst]

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

• 172 consists of chatties and urns of burnt clay and is of a red or black colour. Some resemble the ordinary native pots of various sizes; others are from 1 to 2 feet high narrow urns contracted towards the mouth and tapering towards the bottom, where 3 or 4 short legs give them support for standing upright. Some smaller ones shaped like Roman amphoras without handles, have no such supports. They are smooth and shining, but can hardly be said to be glazed. Ornaments there are none on the surface, except perhaps a line round the brim, but their forms are well proportioned and even elegant. Some of the vessels are in miniature like children's toys from 1¼ to 2¼ inches in diameter. The earth which fills the pots is the same as that within the chamber of the Cairn; bones, ashes and bits of charcoal are usually found at the bottom of the urns; grains of rági have also been found within the chambers, but it is likely, that some practical ryot or wandering Kuruba selected a Cairn for his granary, as it is the practice with natives to secure their grain in earth-holes. Beads of red cornelian of a cylindrical shape and longitudinally pierced and ornamented with straight or zigzag parallel lines, scratched into the stone and filled up with a white substance, are occasionally met with in the smaller pottery.

The iron implements, spears and arrowheads, are very much corroded, so that their shape is hardly distinguishable.

It would be vain, to enter into the question of who were the builders of these Cairns. The Coorgs call them Pándupare (dwellings of the Pándus), but whatever is beyond their historical knowledge, they ascribe to the Pándus. It is certain, that the construction of these Cairns is quite disconnected from the life, customs and history of the present inhabitants of Coorg, nor can they have been the abodes of a legendary pigmy race; but were most likely the resting places of the earthly remains of a generation, that existed anterior to the historical records of the present local races.

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

Monumental Stones of a more recent date are the Kollekallu (from kollu, to kill—and kallu, stone) tombstones in honour of warriors slain in battle. They are found along the eastern districts of Coorg. One I saw in Tavalagheri-gráma in Kiggatnád, some in Kottecád, 6 miles to the east of Mercara, and many in Fraserpet and near the Sómawarpet; the same kind of monuments occur also frequently in the Mysore country, especially in Nuggur and as far north as Belgaum. In all these localities the stones show a similar character. A large collection of them may be seen in the town of Mysore in an open place opposite the Grave-yard. The slabs are of granite, with rough facings, about 6 feet high, 4 feet broad and 9 inches thick, and frequently the lower half is buried in the ground. The front side is generally divided into three compartments, each containing some figures in relief, the background being chiselled out, so that the figures are level with the frame of the compartments. The objects represented in the top frame are one, two or three central figures seated in various postures on low stools such as the Hindus still use, and two female figures standing by their sides with fans. The central figures are evidently the heroes, they sit sword in hand with consequential dignity. The second compartment is filled with a string of 3, 5 or 7 figures alternately males and females, the latter preponderating and in most lively attitudes, the male figures extending their arms and resting their hands on the shoulders of the females who support their partners' arms near the elbows. The extreme figures who are always females hold fans (or guitars?) in their hands. The third frame encloses a battle scene in which warriors on foot and armed with bows and arrows, swords and shields are engaged in combat, one man lying dead on the ground. In the right corner there is a warrior on horseback with sword in hand making gestures of command or encouragement and in the left corner one or two bulls are represented. The

211
172
211
532
172

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

211 figures are in grotesque attitudes, but remarkably well grouped
532 and closely resemble the sculptured reliefs of Halibeed.
•172 In the top compartment there is occasionally a lamp and a Linga both on pedestals, and these insignia, together with the Basavas in the third frame, evidently denote the heroes as Linga worshippers and aliens from the present Coorgs, who know nothing about them; the Canarese Gaudas, in whose countries they are chiefly found, claim them as relics of their ancestors and annually present before these stones offerings of cakes and fruit. The dresses of all the figures represented are not in the Coorg but in the costume of Hindus of the scantiest clothing. Col. Wilks in his *History of Mysore* Vol. I. p. 15. explains the sculptured representations in the
[795] three compartments thus: "The lowest describes the battle in which the hero was slain; the centre compartment represents him in the act of being conveyed to heaven between two celestial nymphs: in the uppermost he has arrived at the regions of bliss and is delineated as seated before the peculiar emblem of his religion—generally the lingum—for the practice of erecting monuments seems chiefly to belong to the sect of Siva."

211 In north and north-east Coorg similar stones, but with
178 simple and coarse sculptural figures are still erected by re-
766 lations of influential men who met with a violent death or were carried away by small-pox and cholera.

211 With the Coorgs it is the custom, to keep images of men
769 and women in Coorg costume chased in silver-plates in the *Keimatta*, which is a small square building near the house, in remembrance of their ancestors whose departed spirits are
[326] there annually worshipped. These plates which are of little artistic merit are made by the country goldsmiths. Near the
[795] *Kannana house*, on that fine hill slope opposite the Central
[648] School in Mercara, there is a stone-slab with a picture in relief of a Coorg warrior. The stone is erected in the paddy

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

fields in remembrance of the (Dalavai) military chief *Kannana Doddeya*, who fell in an engagement with the forces of Hyder Ali near Kájúr-Bágalu in North Coorg in 1767. Before setting out on this expedition he said to the king Muddarájah: "I have twice returned from defeating the Ma-"homedans and made Salam to the Rájah, but this time I shall "not return." The celebrated Coorg hero Appachoo Mandana fell in the same battle. When, after the death of Hyder Ali, Tippu Sultan invaded Coorg, he burnt Kannana's house and hanged 24 members of his family, and the ruins are still visible. A silver plate 3 inches by 2 inches large, with a relief picture similar to that on the stone is preserved by the family in honour of their renowned ancestor.

Shásana-kallu. In some localities viz. in the temple yard at Bhágamandala, in the dévastána at Pálúr, in the ruined temple in Nallúr in Hatgatnád of Kiggatnád-taluq and at the Central School in Mercara (brought from Fraserpet) there are large stone-slabs of granite with inscriptions in peculiar characters that resemble the oldest forms of the Dravidian alphabets, but have not yet been deciphered. They are supposed to be *Shásana-kallu* i. e. memorial stones or records of Government grants. Their inscriptions might perhaps throw some light on the early history of the places in which the stones have been found. In the Mercara Treasury there are three copper plates 8 inches by 3 each, held together by a copper ring, the ends of which are united by a seal representing an elephant about one inch in length from head to tail. The 2 outer plates are inscribed on one side only, the inner plate on both sides. The inscription which numbers 1304 letters seems to be "old Kanada, but many of the letters strikingly resembling Lat and old Pali forms," according to a statement by the Bombay Asiatic Society. The text is said to relate to a grant of land to certain Mysore Brahmins in the villages of Uyambal and Badaneguppe. The date corresponds

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

211 to A. D. 1006 and the charter concludes with the solemn de-
● 172 nunciation "whoever takes away this land which he or others have given, shall for sixty thousand years be born as a worm."

712 **d. The Coorg Cadangas and other remains of defensive works.**

In the April number (1855) of the "Fortnightly Review" in the article: "Were the Ancient Britons Savages?" by W. Walker Wilkins, there occurs a passage which has a most appropriate bearing upon the Coorg Cadangas: "Probably "no country in the world possesses so many ancient earth-"works, certainly none upon such a stupendous scale as our "own.—They are extremely difficult of access from the steep-"ness of the mountain height on which they were formed. "This difficulty the primitive engineer greatly increased by "the most simple and natural means. He sunk one or more "deep trenches round the summit of the hill and raised lofty "banks with the excavated soil. Undoubtedly this is the "most ancient species of rampart known; it existed ages be-"fore the use of mural fortifications and originated in all pro-"bability with the nations in the East. But be that as it may, "the examples above indicated incontestably prove, that the "realization of vast works was as familiar to the mind of the "British regulus or chieftain, as to that of any oriental prince "his contemporary. The organization of labour necessary "for carrying them out evinces besides a condition of society "here in prehistoric times, utterly incompatible with the pre-"vailing notions on the subject."

The description here given literally applies to the Coorg breast-works called *Cadangas*, which are seen in almost every part of this country and which testify to the indefatigable perseverance with which these highlanders toiled to secure the possession of their Hills. They are of a very remote age, for in the time of Dodda Vírappa Vodeya who ruled for 49

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

Though fully alive To 381 their
material interests, the town-people have little desire for or perhaps little faith in education after European fashion. They seem to be quite content with the knowledge of their bazaar-routine. Every Monday there is market, hence the name of the place. (Sómawára=Monday.)

The place is greatly in want of a travellers' bangalow, for which a beautiful site could be obtained near the lodge of the road-overseer. The country about Sómawárpet is very picturesque, especially towards Shanthally, the Mukribetta with a flourishing coffee-plantation at its foot, and the rocks that enclose the Honammana tank. vide p. 15. On the summit of these rocks "Cairns" in excellent preservation have lately been found.

Yélusávirashíme-taluq occupies the northermost part of Coorg. It is a narrow strip of land, about 22 miles in length and 4 in width. Its total area comprises only 91 square miles; yet it contains in its three Hoblis, 168 villages and a population of 17,766 souls, of whom 17,623 are Hindus, 41 Mussulmans, and 98 Native Christians. There are no Coorgs in this taluq; the inhabitants are of the same class as the agricultural population in the adjoining taluq of Hassan. There is a striking contrast between the ryots of Yélusávirashíme and those of Central Coorg. Whilst the latter are well and warmly dressed, comfortably housed and abundantly fed, the former appear very poor and miserable, covered as they are only with a black coarse camlet. They are timid, credulous and submissive to the authority of the Patéls, who find them patient sheep for fleecing, but the Patéls with their connexions are noted as exceedingly litigious amongst themselves and rather troublesome to the Government in times past. The country was wrested from Mysore by the Coorg Rájah, Dodda-Vírappa, who died in 1736, and partakes of the natural features of the Manjarabad district. It is hilly, and some mountains, as the Málimbi and the Uru-uduvé (village-jungles)